



PHOTOGRAPHY/ GARY MCKELLAR

A 36-inch pipeline near the mudslide in Provo Canyon could be covered if the slide continues to move. The line is Provo's chief water source.

Mudslide threatens Provo water supply

By Kris Radish
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PROVO — Utah County officials are monitoring a mudslide in Provo Canyon that could block off a portion of Provo City's water supply.

County Engineer Clyde Naylor said county crews have been watching the slide for several weeks. Naylor said the slide poses no immediate danger, but it has been growing and something will have to be done to stop it.

"We are working with the state geologist now to try to figure out how to handle this,"

Naylor said. "Something will have to be done to stop it eventually."

He said the slide can be seen from Provo Canyon Road (U.S. 189), between Canyon Glen and the old Rotary Park.

"Right now our main worry is that the slide will cut off part of the city's water supply," Naylor said. "The slide is also pushing into the Provo River, and we could have some flooding up there."

Chet Waggener, Provo City chief administrative officer, said a 36-inch pipeline near the slide could be covered if the slide continues to move.

"We can get water from other areas, but we consider that canyon line to be our first source of supply," Waggener said. "We have a lot of springs in the area."

Waggener said city crews have been working closely with Utah County to protect the area from the slide.

Naylor said the county is considering building a wall to stop the slide. He said the county also could move the river to keep it away from the slide. He said the slide isn't new, but because it has been moving for several weeks it could pose a threat.

"I think when power crews were working

on the hills in the canyon the slide started to move," Naylor said.

Three years ago a massive mud slide blocked another Utah County canyon, backed up the Spanish Fork River and destroyed the small town of Thistle.

Naylor said he hopes the Provo Canyon slide isn't the signal of another bad year.

"I don't think this is a signal for more slides," Naylor said. "This is one that has given us trouble before."

He said county crews routinely patrol all the rivers and canyons in the county to spot potential slide areas.